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ABSTRACT

Two contemporary education documents are compared and a discussion of recommendation implementation is presented. The first document, the Report of the Royal Commission of Inquiry on Education in the Province of Quebec, 1963-1966 (the Parent Commission Report) presents an overview of the educational system in Quebec. The second document, the Report of Education Commission 1964-66, Ministry of Education, Government of India (The Kothari Commission Report) stresses the cultural, economic, and political forces which influence education in India. Dissimilarities between the Province of Quebec and the Republic of India are enumerated and common political and historical factors of the two areas are compared. Each document is divided into three parts and deals with pedagogical structure, educational legislation, specific educational achievements, stages and sectors of education, educational reconstruction, and the degree and type of changes which have ensued since publication of the reports. The author concludes that the Parent Commission Report was well received generally but that many of the expectations raised by the report remain unfulfilled. He reports also that, although the Kothari Report was widely discussed upon publication, implementation of its recommendations has been extremely slow due to financial problems and political inertia. References are included. (Author/DB)

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A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF TWO CONTEMPORARY EDUCATIONAL DOCUMENTS: PARENT COMMISSION REPORT (QUEBEC) AND KOTHARI COMMISSION REPORT (INDIA)

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this short study is to present a brief comparative analysis of the salient features of two contemporary educational documents, namely, the Report of the Royal Commission of Inquiry on Education in the Province of Quebec, 1963-1966, (hereinafter referred to as the Parent Commission Report) and the Report of the Education Commission 1964-66, Ministry of Education, Government of India, (designated the Kothari Commission Report hereafter).

It is generally agreed that various geographical, historical, social, political, economic, religious and cultural forces and factors influence and affect the character and development of educational systems in different parts of the world. Canada, or for that matter Quebec, and India are no exception to these commonly observed phenomena. It is therefore, deemed appropriate to begin this paper by giving a brief account of the land and people of Quebec (in the setting of Canada) and of India respectively, before proceeding to discuss the two educational documents themselves in their proper contexts.

For quite understandable reasons, the analysis of the two documents will be confined to highlighting their geneses, structures, some important features and recommendations. The last section of the paper will be devoted to a brief discussion of the extent to which the recommendations of these two Reports have been implemented up to the present time.

Appropriate comparisons will be attempted in all the three main sections of this study. The final summary and conclusions will try to bring to focus the results of this very limited study.

THE SETTING AND BACKGROUND

(a) Canada/Quebec

Since Quebec is one of the ten Provinces of Canada, it is considered relevant to set out by providing a few facts about Canada before proceeding to discuss Quebec itself.

Canada is the largest country in the Western Hemisphere and the second largest in the world, comprising an area of 3,851,809 square miles of contrasting topography, climate, vegetation and resources. The Canadian Federal State was established by the British North America Act of 1867, and now consists of ten Provinces and two Territories. The people of the country is "composed of two predominant linguistic and cultural groups: French and English. To these two major groups, and to small native population of Indians and Eskimos have been added over the last hundred years many thousands of

immigrants representing the major European cultures. For the most part these immigrant groups have associated themselves with the English - speaking community, though maintaining many aspects of their mother cultures. The country has thus never been a homogeneous melting pot, but has rather had the aspect of cultural mosaic in which the major pattern is traced in the colours of the French and English cultures".[1]

As recorded at the census of 1971, the population of Canada was 21,568,311 of which 76.1% were urban dwellers. Of the total population 29.5 per cent were under 15 years of age and this age group has been steadily declining over the years. At the same time the population of working age (generally regarded as those 15-64) has increased from 58.4% in 1961 to 62.3 per cent in 1971. The proportion of persons 65 years of age or over, however, has remained fairly constant at 8 per cent. The relatively short demographic history of the Canadian population has been characterized by an excess of males. However, this excess has nearly disappeared in recent years. By 1971 the sex ratio had almost evened out at 1002 men per 1000 women.[2] By 1966 Canadian life expectancy at birth had reached a new high point of almost 68.8 years for males and 75.2 years for females.[3]

According to the Official Languages Bill which was unanimously adopted in July 1969 both English and French are the official languages of Canada and they "possess and enjoy equality of status and equal rights and privileges as to their

use in all the institutions of the Parliament and Government of Canada."[4]

An overwhelming majority of the people of Canada is affiliated to one or other of the various Christian demonimations. The three numerically largest denominations are the Roman Catholic, United Church and the Anglican comprising over 75 per cent of the total population. Aside from the Christians, the oldest, largest, and most influential religious community in Canada is that of Jews. Besides the Jews, the metropolitan centres of the country have also sizable communities of Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, and Sikhs as well.[5]

Canada is a federal State established by the British North America Act of 1867. The B.N.A. Act gave Canada complete internal self-government, and gradually the country acquired full control over its external affairs also. It is now a fully Sovereign State, except that a few (but very important) parts of its Constitution can be changed only by Act of the British Parliament.[6]

Each Provincial Legislature has exclusive power over the amendment of the Provincial Constitution. Education is one of the matters falling under the provincial jurisdiction.

The Executive Government is vested in the Crown and is exercised by a Governor-General appointed by the Queen on the recommendation of Her Majesty's Canadian Prime Minister. The Governor-General exercises his executive powers on the advice

of his Cabinet, which is formed of the principal members of the Government, chosen by the Prime Minister and responsible to the Parliament of Canada.

The supreme legislative power in the field of jurisdiction assigned to the federal legislature by the B.N.A. Act is vested in a Parliament, consisting of the Queen (represented by the Governor-General), a Senate and a House of Commons. The Parliament of Canada has exclusive jurisdiction in certain specified matters.

Most of the courts are provincial, but their judges, from county courts up, are appointed by the Government of Canada with one or two exceptions. The Supreme Court of Canada and the Provincial Courts form a single system, dealing with cases arising under both dominion and provincial laws.

In each Province, the machinery of government is substantially the same as that of the central government, except that no Province has an Upper House.[7]

As mentioned earlier, under the B.N.A. Act, the Provinces are responsible for the education of all persons. Exceptions to the above include private schools and federally-sponsored schools for Indian and Eskimo students, children of servicemen in Europe, and inmates of federal penitentiaries. In addition the Federal Government helps finance tertiary education in the Provinces, participates in informal education, and makes grants-in-aid for research personnel and equipment.[8]

Provincial autonomy has resulted in distinct educational systems being developed to serve the particular requirements of individual Provinces. It is now time to look at one such provincial system, namely, that of the Province of Quebec.

The present Province of Quebec was known as New France or Canada from 1535 to 1763; as the Province of Quebec from 1763 to 1790; as Lower Canada from 1791 to 1846; as Canada East from 1846 to 1867, and when, by the union of the four original Provinces, the Confederation of the Dominion of Canada was formed, it again became known as the Province of Quebec.

The Province spreads across both sides of the Lower St. Lawrence and extends from the New England States of the U.S.A. to the Davis Straits. It is the largest Province of Canada covering an area of 594,860 square miles or 15.4% of the country. The population on June 1971 was 6,027,764 constituting 27.9% of the total population of Canada with an average density of 11.50, per square mile. More than one-third the total population of the Province is concentrated in the metropolitan area of Montreal, the world's largest inland port, which is located at the confluence of the Ottawa and St. Lawrence rivers 1,000 miles from the Atlantic ocean. The capital city is Quebec, which had a population of 186,088 in 1971. In the same year the population of Greater Quebec was 487,000.

French is the mother tongue of more than 80 per cent of the population of Quebec.

The Government of Quebec consists of a Lieutenant-Governor, an Executive Council and since 1969, a uni-cameral legislature, called the National Assembly.

(b) India

India, also known as Bharat, is the seventh largest and the second most populous country in the world. It has an area of 1,261,817 square miles (3,280,423 square kilometers), and a population of not less than 605 million[9] at the present time, comprising an enormous variety of distinct racial and ethnic types.[10] Corresponding to this complexity of the racial composition is the wealth of different cultural patterns, ranging from the primitive to the most sophisticated. Some sociologists have been able to identify as many as 3,000 social units, usually referred to as castes and sub-castes, in the modern Indian society.[11]

India has, perhaps, the oldest continuous cultural tradition in the world.[12] Its great achievements in Religion, Literature, Art, and Mathematics in antiquity are well known. Its remarkably rich heritage and unique civilization has been enriched in every field by the advent and intermingling with the native peoples, of Persians, Greeks, Parthians, Bactrians, Scythians, Huns, Turks, Jews, Zoroastrians, and finally the Europeans, especially the Portuguese, the Dutch, the French and the British - in recent centuries.

India's amazing complexity and diversity are manifested not only in its racial and ethnic composition but also in its linguistic multiplicity and religious pluralism.

The 1961 census of India enumerated a total of 1,652 mother tongues which have been grouped into 826 languages and dialects.[13] The constitution of India recognizes fifteen major languages i.e. (in the order of the number of people speaking them), Hindi, Telugu, Bengali, Marathi, Tamil, Urdu, Gujarati, Kannada, Malayalam, Oriya, Punjabi, Assamese, Kashmiri, Sindhi, and Sanskrit. The Official Languages Bill was passed in the Indian Parliament in 1968 making Hindi the official language of the Union of India and retaining English as an alternative official or "link" language for certain purposes.

In spite of the fact that nearly 83 per cent of the population ~~are~~ is Hindus, according to the constitution of the country, India is a secular democracy with no official State religion. Over eleven per cent of the people are Muslims, the largest religious minority. Next in number comes Christians (2.6%), followed by Sikhs (about 1.9%). Buddhists, Jains, and other smaller religious groups constitute the remaining one and one-half per cent of the population.[14]

According to the 1971 census, the total population of India was 547,949,809. As compared to the 1961 census, it showed an increase of 24.8 per cent. The main cause of this increase in population is the fall in death rate brought about by better health conditions, effective control of epidemics,

efficient handling of famine conditions and general improvement and economic development. The population has gone up despite a small fall in the birth rate.[15] The average density of population per square kilometer in 1971 was 178. It varied considerably from State to State.

There has been a steady, though slow, increase in life expectancy during the successive decades during this century and an accelerated increase during the past twenty five years. The average life expectancy which was 32 years in 1950 had increased to 56 years in 1975. India has a very young age structure; nearly 59 per cent of the population is below twenty five years of age. Another interesting demographic fact is that the sex ratio of the population has been generally adverse to females, comprising only 93 females to every 100 males.[16]

A little over 80 per cent of the people of India live in villages and the remaining population in cities and towns. During the past half century there has been a slow but steady shift towards urbanization in India[17] as in most other countries of the world. The percentage of workers to the total population is only 33. Seventy-two per cent of the people in the work force are engaged in agricultural and other related occupations.[18]

India declared its independence from British colonial rule on August 15, 1947, and became a Sovereign Democratic Republic on January 26, 1950, with a parliamentary form of

Government based upon universal, adult franchise. In the last general election held in March 1971 there was an electorate of 275 million peopl 21 years or older.

The Government of the country consists of the Union Government and the Governments of twenty-two States and nine Union Territories. The allocation of responsibilities between the Union and the States is clearly indicated in the Constitution of the country.

Education in India is primarily the responsibility of State Governments but the Union Government has also been entrusted with certain responsibilities specified in the Constitution. These include co-ordination of educational facilities, determination of standards of higher education, scientific and technical education, research, and promotion of the official language Hindi and all other major Indian languages. Most of the educational development plans are formulated and implemented with some assistance from the Central Government which is also responsible for the running of five Central Universities and other similar institutions of higher studies and research. It also runs 170 Central Schools in different parts of the country. A special responsibility of the Union Government is the promotion of the education of the weaker sections of the population.[19]

From what has been outlined in the preceding few pages about the land and people of Canada and Quebec on the one hand and that of India on the other, it should be pretty

obvious that there are more dis-similarities than similarities between the Province of Quebec and the Republic of India. Even though the Province of Quebec is almost half the size of India, its population is only one-hundredth that of India! The contrast in topography, climate, vegetation and resources is also very striking. The variation in demographic background is equally remarkable and significant. India has, perhaps, the oldest continuous cultural tradition in the world; Quebec's recorded historical traditions do not extend beyond a few centuries. The complexity and diversity noticeable in India's racial, ethnic, linguistic and religious composition, do not exist in the Province of Quebec. Compared to India's 20 per cent urban dwellers, Quebec has 75 per cent such people.

It is at the historical and political levels that Quebec and India have certain common memories and heritages. Some common historical memories are none too pleasant neither for Quebec nor for India. Be that as it may, the historical reality as it exists now is that Quebec as part of Canada and the Republic of India are both members of the Commonwealth. It is quite significant and important that parliamentary democracy has taken roots both in Quebec and India.

With the facts given in the preceding pages as a back-drop, one may now proceed to say a few words about the development of education in the Province of Quebec until the establishment of the Parent Commission in order to see it in its proper context. Following this very brief outline, the

Commission and its Report will be discussed more fully. In the subsequent section the same procedure will be followed in the case of India and the Kothari Commission Report.

GENESES, STRUCTURES, FEATURES, RECOMMENDATIONS

(a) Parent Commission Report

The history of education in Quebec is rather uneven as the general history of the Province itself. Some historians have distinguished five periods in the Province's educational development: (1) from 1608 to 1760 when education was under the authority of the Roman Catholic Church; (2) from 1760-1841 when attempts were made to establish schools under central direction closely linked to the civil authority; (3) from 1841 to 1867 during which period administration of education was almost wholly entrusted to local authorities; (4) from 1867 to 1907 a period during which there took place not only the expansion of public and private institutions but also the emergence of a dual system of education based upon religious confessionality; (5) from 1907 to the present day which has witnessed intensified governmental action in support of the public school system sensitive to the constantly changing needs of an industrial society.

This is not the place to describe in detail the educational developments which took place in Quebec in any of these five periods. For the present purpose it would suffice to state that even towards the end of the 1950's the system

of Education in Quebec lagged behind developments in some other parts of the country and the world.

Inspite of the stiffling political conservatism, by mid-XXth century several voices were raised in certain quarters for altering the status quo and moving towards a more modern society in Quebec. The impact of the various progressive forces came to be termed "the Quiet Revolution" and in political terms, the Liberal Party led by Jean Lesage, symbolized some of the elements of this quiet revolution. The majority of the people of Quebec wanted a change for the better and the Liberals who won the provincial election in June 1960 undertook to bring about this peaceful revolution through the instrumentality of education as one of their chief weapons. For achieving this proposed goal the Liberal Party enacted a series of laws, collectively known as the Grande Charte de l'Education (Magna Carta of Education). However, as Magnuson writes, "These laws were designed to solve the most pressing educational problems - to repair rather than reform education."[20]

One such laws passed in 1961 appointed a Royal Commission of Inquiry on Education in the Province of Quebec, the first of its kind in the Province in almost a century. The Commission, under the chairmanship of Mgr. Alphonse-Marie Parent, the then Vice-Rector of Laval University, had very broad terms of reference authorizing it to enquire into all types and levels of education. Besides, the chairman, the Commission consisted of seven other members and an associate member. Through

public hearings lasting for several months, the Commission collected more than three hundred briefs from a representative cross-section of the population of the Province. To this vast collection of data was added the findings of the commission's own on-the-spot investigations of the state of education prevailing in other parts of Canada, the U.S.A., Western Europe and the U.S.S.R.

The first section of the Commission's Report was published in April 1963 and deals primarily with the structure of the educational system of Quebec at the provincial level. Among its thirty-three recommendations are to be found some of the most important and far-reaching suggestions for reform and modernization which were implemented in later years. These include the appointment of a Minister of Education charged with the duty to promote and co-ordinate educational services at all levels, including the private and public sectors; the creation of a Superior Council of Education to advise the Minister and the establishment of a Ministry of Education. Several other administrative changes pertaining to these new structures are also recommended in this first part of the Report.

The second section of the Report dealing with the pedagogical structures of the educational system of the Province of Quebec was published in 1964 and consists of two volumes. The first volume is concerned with the structures and levels of education and contains 192 recommendations in

this regard. A six-year elementary programme to be followed by a comprehensive high school course of five years; a two-year programme of post-secondary level study leading either to University entrance or to the world of work; a three-year University programme of study leading to the first degree; one or two additional years of study and research for a Master's degree and at least three years of study and research after the first degree for the degree of Doctor are among the important recommendations made in this volume. The second volume deals with programmes of study and educational services and has made 210 recommendations with respect to these topics. Out of a number of progressive suggestions which this volume contains, the recommendations pertaining to the promotion of individualized instruction, overall development of the child, encouragement of creativity, guidance, subject promotion and continuous progress seem to merit special attention.

The third and last section of the Report published in March 1966 also consists of two volumes and deals principally with the administration of education. The first volume covers confessionality and non-confessionality, cultural diversity and administrative structures at the local and regional levels and contains 74 recommendations pertaining to these topics. As subsequent events proved, the most controversial recommendation made in this part of the report seems to have been the one pertaining to the establishment of a non-confessional system of schools parallel to the existing Catholic and Protestant

systems. The second volume of this last section of the Report contains 67 recommendations and is concerned with educational finance and the rights and duties of parents, teachers and students.

(b) Kothari Commission Report

At no period of its long history has India been an unenlightened country. In the words of F.W. Thomas, a distinguished British Indologist, "Education is no exotic in India. There is no country where the love of learning has so early an origin or has exercised so lasting and powerful an influence."[21] There are four clearly marked periods in the pre-independence history of education in India i.e., the Brahmanic, the Buddhist, the Muslim, and the British. An effective British policy on education in India began to be implemented from 1835 and since that date, a number of Committees and Commissions ~~were~~ was appointed to study the various problems of education in the country. Wood's Education Despatch of 1854, the Hunter Commission Report of 1882, the Indian Universities Commission Report of 1902, the Calcutta University Commission Report of 1917, the Sargent Report of 1944 are some of the most important landmarks in the educational history of India during the colonial period. However, at the termination of the British rule in India in 1947, only 13% of the people of that country were considered as literate.

One of the first acts of the independent India was to give a new Constitution to itself which came into force on January 26, 1950. This basic document contains a number of important provisions which has a direct or indirect bearing on education. It enjoins upon the people of India to secure for all their fellow citizens social economic and political justice, liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship, and equality of status and opportunity. Through successive Five Year Plans of national development - the first of which was launched in 1951 - the country has been striving to realize these basic ideals, in which process education is viewed as one of the main agencies for securing to the individual, opportunities for growth and to the society, the human resources of skills and attitudes needed for raising standards of living, and of life.

The first four years of independence was a period of great and unforeseen difficulties for India and consequently it was not possible for the various levels of Government to render adequate attention to the education sector. The State governments, however, did adopt a few broad schemes of expansion and improvement during this period and the Union Government, on its part, created a Ministry of Education and Scientific Research and appointed a University Education Commission, the report of which has influenced the entire development of higher education since 1948. During the period of the First Five Year Plan covering the years 1951 to 1956 a

Secondary Education Commission was constituted to report on this particular level of education. As a result of the recommendations made by this Commission in 1953, a number of qualitative improvements were effected in the Secondary level of education in subsequent years spanning the Second Five Year Plan period from 1956 to 1960. The programme of higher secondary schools and multipurpose schools which is now in operation is the direct result of the recommendations of this Commission.

The Third Five Year Plan, 1961-1965, while expanding further the schemes launched in the First and Second Five Year Plans, placed great emphasis on the further development of primary and technical education. The Third Plan declared that "programmes of education lie at the base of the effort to forge the bonds of common citizenship, to harness the energies of the people and to develop the natural and human resources of every part of the country.------It is one of the major aims of the Third Plan to expand and intensify the educational effort and to bring every home within its fold."[22]

In keeping with the spirit of the aims and objectives stated in the Third Five Year Plan, in 1964, the Government of India appointed another Education Commission - the third one after the country attained its independence in 1947 - under the chairmanship of Professor D.S. Kothari, an eminent Indian Scientist, to advise it "on the national pattern of education and on the general principles and policies for the

development of education at all stages and in all its aspects."[23] This 17-member Commission included among its personnel not only some of the most distinguished Indian educationists but also ~~five~~ six experts from abroad. In the course of its labours it also set up twelve Task Forces and seven Working Groups; spent about one hundred days visiting universities, colleges and schools in India holding discussions with teachers, students and administrators; the members of the Commission also interviewed men and women distinguished in public life, scientists, industrialists and scholars in different fields and others interested in education, totalling nearly 9000 persons; the Commission had also as consultants some twenty internationally known educationists and scientists from the U.S.A., U.K., France, the U.S.S.R., Sweden and Japan.

As can be expected, the outcome of the co-operative effort of such a galaxy of educationists is a weighty and impressive document. Though this closely printed report published in June 1966 contains only some 230 major recommendations in its 692 pages with scores of tables and charts, it is a unique educational document in some ways. For the first time in the history of education in India, this Report dealt with all aspects and sectors of education in a comprehensive manner reflecting the national aspirations of the poeple of India.

The Kothari Commission Report, just like the Parent Commission Report, is divided into three parts. The first part covers chapters I-VI and deals with general aspects of educational reconstruction common to all stages and sectors of education. These include re-orientation of the educational system to national objectives, structural reorganization, improvement of teachers, enrolment policies and equalization of educational opportunity.

The second part of the Report, which is the longest, covers chapters VII to XVII. It deals with the different stages and sectors of education. Chapters VII to X deal with some aspects of school education such as problems of expansion, curriculum, teaching methods, textbooks, guidance, evaluation, administration and supervision. Chapters XI to XIII, deal with problems of higher education which include, amongst others, the establishment of major universities, programmes of qualitative improvement, enrolment and university governance. Chapters XIV and XV deal respectively with education for agriculture and technical and vocational education. Chapter XVI discusses programmes of science education and research. Chapter XVII deals with problems of adult education.[24]

The third part of the Report deals with the problems of implementing the various recommendations made. Chapter XVIII discusses educational planning and administration and Chapter XIX deals with educational finance.

The main body of the Report is followed by a number of supplementary notes and appendices containing a mass of statistical data and a summary of the major recommendations made in the Report.

The most crucial recommendation in the whole report seems to be one pertaining to the re-arrangement of the national priorities in education. A programme of educational reconstruction in India, according to the Kothari Commission, has three important facets:

1) a vital transformation of the content of education so as to relate it to the life, needs and aspirations of the nation;
2) an imaginative programme of qualitative improvement so that the standards achieved are adequate, keep continually rising, and at least in a few sectors, become internationally comparable; and
3) a carefully planned expansion of educational facilities broadly on the basis of manpower needs and with an accent on equalization of educational opportunities.

After reviewing the educational achievements of the first three Five Year Plans of India, the Kothari Commission pointed out that thus far the stress has been mainly on expansion of educational facilities with an attempt at some equalization of educational opportunities. Programmes of qualitative improvement have received inadequate attention and hardly any note has been taken of the need for transforming the content of education. The Commission has pointed out the need for altering the national priorities. The highest priority should hereafter be given to the problem of transformation of the content of education and has suggested the following five programmes:

1) the introduction of work experience as an integral part of general education at all stages; vocationalization of secondary education and expansion of professional education at the university stage;
2) involving educational institutions intimately with the community at all stages; promoting national consciousness and commitment to national development; and introduction of social or national service as an essential part of education at all stages;

3) emphasis on and improvement of the teaching of science at all stages and the promotion of scientific research;

4) the cultivation of social and moral values and the importance of value-orientation to all education.

5) transformation of the educational process in the classroom so as to discourage passive or rote memorising, to encourage curiosity, love of knowledge, creative thinking and problem-solving ability, and to build up habits and skills of self-study.

For qualitative improvement the Commission has emphasized the need to create a climate of sustained hard work in all the educational institutions and to ensure that the available facilities are intensely utilized. This is really the most crucial programme and some of the major recommendations of the Commission in this regard are:

1) the improvement of remuneration of teachers at all stages accompanied by an improvement in their qualifications in general education and professional training;

2) the revision and upgrading of all curricula, especially in science and mathematics; and the adoption of the regional languages as media of education at the university stage;

3) the preparation of high quality textbocks and other teaching materials at school and University stages and making them easily available;

4) comprehensive examination reform and the introduction of internal assessment to ensure that students work throughout the year;

5) making the educational system less rigid and uniform and to encourage experimentation and innovation;

6) the organization of a nation-wide programme of school and college improvement in which every institution will be encouraged to stretch itself to the utmost;

7) the reorganization of the educational structure on the 10 + 2 + 3 pattern.

In respect of expansion of facilities and equalization of educational opportunities, the Commission has recommended that a massive attack should be launched on the problem of adult illiteracy which should be liquidated in a period of not more than twenty years. Side by side, attempts will have to be made to provide good and effective education of five years for all children by 1975-76 and at least seven years of such education by 1985-86. Even more important is its recommendation that expansion of higher secondary and collegiate education should be related to manpower needs and be regulated on a selective basis. Besides, the Commission has also emphasized the need to increase facilities for free education; for supply of books; for expansion of the scholarship programme; for the acceleration of the expansion of education among women and the backward classes; and for reducing the large imbalances in educational development that now exist in the different regions and States.

From the thumb-nail sketches of the geneses, structures, salient features and recommendations of the Parent Commission and Kothari Commission Reports given above, it should be clear that there are quite a number of features common to both these contemporary educational documents.

It was the first time in the educational history of Quebec that a Royal Commission of Inquiry was given such a comprehensive mandate to inquire into all types of formal education. The Commission was appointed at a favourable

juncture in the political history of the Province of Quebec and the members of its personnel were carefully chosen. The voluminous report which they completed in five volumes, by March 1966, is a monument to their industry and thoroughness. The Kothari Commission was also appointed at a crucial period in the educational development of India. This Commission also had a very inclusive mandate to advise the Government of India on all aspects and sectors of education in a comprehensive manner. The composition of the personnel of the Kothari Commission was larger and even more impressive than that of the Parent Commission. However, it must have been a Herculean task for the members of this Commission to submit such a high calibre report within two years of their appointment.

The Parent Commission Report is a much lengthier document as compared to the Kothari Commission Report. It was published in three instalments: part one in April 1963; part two in two volumes in October 1964; and part three in two volumes in March 1966. Kothari Commission Report is a single - volume document and was published on June 29, 1966.

Though both the documents contain three parts, the contents and organization of their materials differ somewhat. Whereas part one of the Parent Commission Report is devoted to the discussion of the structure of the educational system of Quebec with particular reference to educational legislation problems and responsibilities of political authorities in

education, the Ministry of Education, etc., the Kothari Commission in the first part of its Report is mainly concerned with the general problems of a national system of education. The latter Report, from its very outset, envisioned the national objective as the internal transformation of education so as to relate it to the life, needs and aspirations of the people. Qualitative improvement and expansion of educational facilities with an accent on equalization of educational opportunities are the other two key concepts discussed in this part of the Report.

Part two of both the Reports covers more or less the same ground, namely, the pedagogical structure, programmes of study and the various educational services. The Parent Commission Report discusses these topics at greater length. In both the Reports, these mid-sections are the most substantial. In the programmes of study, agricultural, vocational, technical, science and adult education receive much greater emphasis in the Kothari Report reflecting the particular national need. Parent Report however, is much more comprehensive in certain other respects. Out of the 576 recommendations of the Parent Report, 402 are to be found in its second part. The major part of the Kothari Report recommendations is also with reference to its second part.

The third and last part of the Parent Report is about the administration of education in Quebec and takes up two volumes. In Kothari Report only two chapters are allotted to this topic. Here again, the differing national milieux are mirrored. The first volume of the third part of the Parent Report is all about the problems and the need for a unified educational administration in a religiously and culturally pluralistic modern Quebec society. Kothari Commission had to tackle many a complex and delicate problems, but not a problem such as this one and therefore, there is no reference to it in its Report. The last volume of the Parent Report deals with educational finance and the participants in education, namely, the teachers, the parents, and the students. It is not very clear to me why the latter topic was kept to the very last pages. But that is another matter. The third part of the Kothari Report under the general heading 'Implementation' has two chapters, the one about educational planning and administration and the other about educational finance. It will be seen later that these are very crucial issues in the educational and national development of India.

It is very often taken for granted that the success of any Commission Report is measured in terms of the extent to which the recommendations made by it have been implemented by the authorities concerned. For this reason, as well as for some others, it is now time to take a look at the two Reports under review from this particular angle.

IMPLEMENTATION

(a) Parent Commission Report

The Parent Commission Report, on the whole, was well received by the Government of the Province of Quebec and as a result some of its recommendations were implemented without much delay. The Commission's recommendation that the Department of Public Instruction be amalgamated with the Department of Youth to create a new Department of Education was implemented in 1964. So also, was created the Superior Council of Education with its various Committees to act as a public consultative body to advise the Minister of Education. In accordance with the recommendations made by the Commission, the old system of fragmented regional and local School Commissions was replaced by a unified administrative structure made up of School Committee, Regional Commission, and Council of School Development. In keeping with the recommendations of the Commission with regard to programme of studies and the organization of schools, six-year elementary programmes followed by five-year secondary programmes were set up. Besides, a new kind of institution, first called an "institute" and later named Collèges d'Enseignement Général et Professionnel and commonly called CEGEPs was established providing a two-year post secondary programme leading either to the work world or University entrance. There existed at least 40 such colleges in 1972-73 school year.[25] Teacher education

is now provided in Universities rather than in Colleges as was the earlier practice.

The spirit and method of school instruction recommended by the Commission may be termed as activism. It connotes individualized instruction, overall development of the child and the encouragement of creativity. Activism in teaching and learning signalled a true innovation in education in Quebec as are progressive trends like subject promotion, continuous progress and more intensified guidance programmes. Democratization at various levels and sectors of education was one of the major objectives aimed at by the Parent Commission and it seems reasonable to state that this objective has been achieved to a large extent during the last decade. Clearly, the foregoing statement does not suggest that all the ideals and objectives put forth by the Commission have been realized to their fullest extent. As a matter of fact, some of its recommendations have been either ignored or simply forgotten. In some other instances, the demands of reality have necessitated certain adjustments and modifications. Some of the expectations raised by the Parent Commission Report still remain unfulfilled.

(b) Kothari Commission Report

The Kothari Commission Report was widely discussed by all types of professional and other concerned people in India for about two years and out of the consensus of opinion emerging therefrom, the Government of India, with the help of

one of its special parliamentary Committees, formulated a National Policy on Education, and issued it in the form of a formal Resolution on July 24, 1968.[26] The seventeen key points incorporated in this Resolution include (1) free and compulsory education for all children upto the age of 14, (2) improved status, emoluments and education of teachers, (3) development of the official and regional languages of India, (4) removal of regional disparities in the provision of facilities with special reference to education of girls and backward classes, (5) greater emphasis on education for agriculture and industry, (6) liquidation of illiteracy, (7) acceptance of an educational structure with a broadly uniform pattern of ten years general education followed by two years of higher secondary stage and three years college programme for a first degree, (8) and an investment of 6 per cent of national income in education per year.

The principal recommendations of the Kothari Commission Report and the Government of India Resolution on National Policy on Education provided the framework for the formulation of policies and programmes pertaining to Education in the Fourth Five Year Plan launched in 1969. In general terms, this "Fourth Plan aimed at making progress towards implementing the Constitutional Directive of free and compulsory education for the age group 6-14. At secondary and higher stages of education more emphasis was laid on consolidation and diversification so as to meet the diverse needs of trained manpower

of requisite standard."[27] However, the target of 90 per cent laid down for elementary school enrolment fell short by 6 per cent on account of the comparatively low enrolment rate of girls. The anticipated enrolment figures in secondary education showed even a much greater shortfall. The higher education enrolment target, however, was exceeded by a comfortable margin. One of the most distressing aspect of education in India is the low priority accorded to adult literacy campaign. Even though the percentage of adult illiterates is gradually decreasing, on account of certain demographic factors, their absolute number is still on the rise.[28] Though there has been a number of shortcomings and delays in the implementation of the Kothari Commission recommendations, the improvements registered in certain areas such as technical and vocational education, agricultural education, teacher education, science education, certain types of science-oriented professional education, and scientific and industrial research, have been quite creditable.

It is encouraging to note that in the Fifth Five Year Plan which was launched in 1974 care has been taken to avoid some of the glaring mistakes and failures of the past in the field of education. An attempt has been made to place the priorities where they belong as proposed by the Kothari Commission. The Fifth Plan which is now in operation lays great emphasis on the transformation of the educational system so as to relate it to life, needs, and aspirations of the

common people and to build up a truly democratic, secular, and socialist society. Priority is also given to the qualitative improvement of Education so that the standards achieved may be adequate for social and economic needs and help in improving productivity.

In reading the literature pertaining to the implementation of the recommendations made by the two Reports one is struck by the remarkable speed with which some of the important recommendations of the Parent Commission Report were accepted and translated into law by the Government of the Province of Quebec. By contrast the machinery of the Government of India appears to be a very slow-moving gear. However, it is only fair to bear in mind that the Government of the Province of Quebec had only 5½ million people to deal with whereas India had about one hundred times as many people, at the time of the publication of the two Reports. Besides, in India like in Canada, Education being a "provincial subject", speedy action in this area is not possible without the wholehearted co-operation of the twenty-two States and nine Territories. The complexity and diversity prevailing in the country were referred to earlier. Above all these constraining factors are the limitations imposed by the financial and trained manpower resources. In a quarter of century of planned development, in no year was the Indian Parliament able to vote more than 5 per cent of the national income for education.

In spite of these very real handicaps India has recorded some genuine progress in education since the Kothari Commission Report was published. For example, the total student enrolment in all types of schools in 1965-66 was 66.04 million[29]; today it is 87.23 million.[30] University enrolment in 1965-66 academic year was 1.49 million[31]; today it is 3.4 million.[32] There has been a proportionate increase in the number of educational institutions and teaching personnel as well. All States of India have introduced free education for children in the age group 6-11. It is also free for children in the age group 11-14 in all States except three. All States have compulsory Primary Education Acts except four. Secondary Education is also free in a few States.

With all the progress achieved in education in India since the Kothari Commission made its recommendations, it seems fair to state that many of those proposals still remain as statements of goals, ideals and aspirations yet to be realized.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study began with giving a brief account of the land and people of Quebec (in the context of Canada) and India. In many ways Quebec is quite different from India. However, there are some common grounds between Quebec and India in some of their historical experiences and political institutions. The comparative analysis of the Parent Commission Report and the Kothari Commission Report attempted in their respective

milieu brought to light many common features and concerns. Both these educational documents are unique in certain ways. The laws enacted by the Province of Quebec on the basis of recommendations made by the Parent Commission have brought about a veritable educational revolution in that Province during the last decade. For a variety of very complex reasons, the Kothari Commission Report has not had the same impact on the system of education in India.

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